



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Ashley National Forest; Utah and Wyoming; Revision of the Land Management Plan for the Ashley National Forest

AGENCY: Forest Service, Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Notice of opportunity to object to the revised Land Management Plan and the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern for the Ashley National Forest.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, is revising the Ashley National Forest's Land Management Plan (Plan). The Forest Service has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for its revised Plan and a draft Record of Decision (ROD). This notice is to inform the public that the Ashley National Forest is initiating a 60-day period where individuals or entities with specific concerns about the Ashley National Forest's revised Plan and the associated FEIS may file objections for Forest Service review prior to the approval of the revised Plan. This is also an opportunity to object to the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern for the Ashley National Forest.

DATES: The publication date of the legal notice in the Ashley National Forest's newspaper of record, the *Vernal Express* (Vernal, Utah), initiates the 60-day objection period and is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection (36 CFR 219.52(c)(5)). An electronic scan of the legal notice with the publication date will be posted at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/ashley/landmanagement/planning>.

ADDRESSES: The Ashley National Forest's revised Plan, FEIS, draft ROD, and Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern and other supporting information will be

available for review at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/ashley/landmanagement/planning> or at the following office: Ashley National Forest, 355 North Vernal Ave., Vernal, UT 84078, phone: (435) 781-5118.

Objections must be submitted to the Objection Reviewing Officer by one of the following methods:

- **Electronically to the Objection Reviewing Officer:** Electronic comments are preferred and may be submitted through the project webpage at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=49606>; click “Comment/Object on Project.” Electronic submissions (including all attachments) must be submitted in one of the following formats: MS Word (*.docx), Rich Text Format (*.rtf), or Adobe PDF (*.pdf) and must be readable and searchable with optical character recognition software. An automated response will confirm your electronic objection has been received.
- **Via regular mail, carrier, or hand delivery to the following address:** USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region, ATTN: Objection Reviewing Officer, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, excluding Federal holidays. Please be explicit as to whether the objection is for the “Ashley National Forest Plan” or the “Ashley Species of Conservation Concern” for the Ashley National Forest. Please coordinate any hand-delivered objections with the objections and litigation staff directly through email (objections-intermtn-regional-office@usda.gov) in order to ensure the objection is properly documented and a receipt provided.
- **By Fax:** To the Objection Reviewing Officer at 801-625-5365. Faxes must be addressed to “Objection Reviewing Officer.” The fax coversheet should include a subject line with “Ashley National Forest Plan Revision Objection” or “Ashley Species of Conservation Concern” and specify the number of pages being submitted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ashley National Forest Planner, Anastasia Allen, at (406) 270-9241 or *anastasia.allen@usda.gov*.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf or hard of hearing (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The decision to approve the revised Plan for the Ashley National Forest and the Regional Forester's list of species of conservation concern for the Ashley National Forest will be subject to the objection process identified in 36 CFR part 219 Subpart B (219.50 to 219.62). Per 36 CFR 219.53 only individuals and entities who have submitted substantive formal comments related to a plan revision during the opportunities for public comment that are attributable to the objector may file an objection unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for formal comment.

How to File an Objection

Objections must be submitted to the Reviewing Officer at the address shown in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. An objection must include the following (36 CFR 219.54(c)):

(1) The objector's name and address along with a telephone number or email address if available. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an objection, the Forest Service will attempt to verify the identity of the objector to confirm objection eligibility;

(2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection);

(3) Identification of the lead objector when multiple names are listed on an objection. The Forest Service will communicate to all parties to an objection through the lead objector. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must also be provided if requested;

(4) The name of the plan revision being objected to and the name and title of the responsible official;

(5) A statement of the issues and/or parts of the plan revision to which the objection applies;

(6) A concise statement explaining the objection and suggesting how the proposed plan decision may be improved. If the objector believes that the plan revision is inconsistent with law, regulation, or policy, an explanation should be included;

(7) A statement that demonstrates the link between the objector's prior substantive formal comments and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for formal comment; and

(8) All documents referenced in the objection (a bibliography is not sufficient), except the following need not be provided:

- a. All or any part of a Federal law or regulation,
- b. Forest Service Directive System documents and land management plans or other published Forest Service documents,
- c. Documents referenced by the Forest Service in the planning documentation related to the proposal subject to objection, and
- d. Formal comments previously provided to the Forest Service by the objector during the proposed plan, plan amendment, or plan revision comment period.

It is the responsibility of the objector to ensure that the Objection Reviewing Officer receives the objection in a timely manner. The regulations generally prohibit extending the length of the objection filing period (36 CFR 219.56(d)). However, when the time period expires on a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal holiday, the time is extended to the end of the next Federal

working day (11:59 p.m. for objections filed by electronic means such as e-mail or facsimile machine) (36 CFR 219.56).

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: The responsible official who will approve the ROD for the Ashley National Forest revised Plan is Susan Eickhoff, Forest Supervisor for the Ashley National Forest, 350 North Vernal Ave., Vernal, UT 84078, (435) 781-5101. The responsible official for the identification of the species of conservation concern for the Ashley National Forest is Mary Farnsworth, Intermountain Region Regional Forester, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401.

The Regional Forester is the reviewing officer for the revised Plan since the Forest Supervisor is the deciding official (36 CFR 219.56(e)). Objection review of the list of species of conservation concern will be subject to a separate objection process from the Plan revision. The Chief of the Forest Service is the reviewing officer for the list of species of conservation concern as the Regional Forester is the responsible official (36 CFR 219.56(e)(2)). This authority may be delegated to an individual Deputy Chief or Associate Deputy Chief for National Forest System, consistent with delegations of authority provided in the Forest Service Manual at sections 1235.4 and 1235.5.

Dated: April 7, 2023.

Jacqueline Emanuel,

Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.

[FR Doc. 2023-07892 Filed: 4/13/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 4/14/2023]